



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 4, 2003

I send greetings to those celebrating Public Service Recognition Week.

Public service is vital to the American character. Americans realize that giving something back to our communities strengthens our country and fulfills our obligation to serve a greater cause. Our Nation is deeply indebted to the men and women who devote themselves to public service through their careers.

Every day across America, government employees at the Federal, State, and local levels carry out countless responsibilities that help protect our homeland, maintain critical services, ensure economic growth, and strengthen our national security. With the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, more than 170,000 dedicated public servants are now tasked with the overriding mission of protecting their fellow Americans from terrorism. These individuals serve our citizens and help make our government more efficient and effective.

Over the last two years, my Administration has taken significant action to encourage public service and civic engagement. Americans have responded with an outpouring of kindness and volunteer service that is transforming our Nation, one heart, one soul at a time. Through the USA Freedom Corps, we continue to mobilize our citizens and provide opportunities for individuals to improve their communities by serving in local schools, libraries, police and fire departments, places of worship, and hospitals. We are grateful for these dedicated citizens and for all public servants who touch lives, inspire others, and help us realize the promise and potential of our great Nation.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a wonderful week.